

Peasants Revolt in Southern England

Henry II's legal reforms, by making justice available to all free men in royal courts, gave enhanced status to free tenants of the great landowners. The villains did not share in the wage increases that followed the depopulation by the plague in the mid-14th century, but the landed class kept rents high. In 1380, a series of harsh taxes + poll tax of 1 shilling a head; discontent reached a peak. The attempt to force

payment by evaders produced the revolt of 1381, which began in Essex and spread through Kent and East Anglia. Led by WAT TYLER, and an excommunicated priest JOHN BALE, the rebels stormed London. Tyler was killed by WALWORTH, the mayor in a scuffle.

King Richard II promised to grant their demands - abolition of serfdom, commutation of personal services into rents, and abolition of poll tax, and the Statute of Labourers (1351) (which attempted to freeze wages).

Rural enclosures in the counties was not finally subdued until the end of 1381.

1381

Serfdom's Radical Abrogation

In England, the main rising took place in 1381 under the leadership of Wat TYLER. The demands of the peasants included the abolition of serfdom, the substitution of fixed money rent for land in lieu of personal service, freedom from obligation of using the lord's mills, and so on.

This revolt, like those on the continent
was suppressed,

1381

1912 Dates J-BK

Italy

Decline of Genoa.

Venice was powerful.

1381

Peasants' revolt in England

1381

1912 Dates J-BK

England & Scotland

TYLER'S Rebellion.

1381

1912 Dates J-BK

Rebellion of Tyler, WAT

England

A peasants' revolt provoked by the poll tax levied on all persons above 15; under WAT and JACK STRAW the people throughout Kent & Essex rose and marched on London where they burned JOHN OF GAUNT's palace and Temple Bar, opened the prisons, broke into the Tower, and murdered the archbishop of CANTERBURY. They met King Richard II at Smithfield (1381) demanding that there

should be no outlawry, no serfdom, and
but one bishop in England. The leader
TYLER, was arrested on a pretext and
when he resisted he was killed by Watworth
Mayor of London. When the rebels heard
what happened, they despaired. The effect
of the uprising was to repeal the taxes for
a time and to annul the Statute
of Labours.

1381

The Peasant's Revolt